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New Orleans Streets

By JEANNE DE LAVIGNE

They say Eden has been lost in the shuffle of the ages: but I know better: for I have walked in Eden . . . and I shall walk there again.

To some, they are only streets: but to me they are singing children: each one is a crooning, compassionate mother: my heart lies pillowed on every uneven stone of them.

They are called crooked and noisy and narrow: they are: but to me they are love-warmed and gilded with undying glory.

There is Esplanade . . . its stateliness a little frayed: its palms listening to the tunes of other days.

There is St. Louis . . . dying by inches, like the rest . . . but deathless, after all; green balconies, tier on tier: and wisteria: Mona Lisa faces: a fat Spanish grocer whose consuming perplexity is the ever-shifting aliases of *les dames de la Rue Dauphine.*

There is Rue Royale . . . glamorous, every step: and faded and tattered and broken, too: *rendezvous* of incomparable jade and carved ivory and painted fans and andirons.

There is Decatur . . . where contentedly walk God and the devil and a million mules.

There are Bourbon and Iberville and Conti and Toulouse and Bienville: and there is Chartres: and of all the old streets, my heart cries longest to Chartres: maybe it is the Cabildo: maybe it is Jackson Square: ugly and cluttered . . . but it floats in my dreams like a young moon, sweet and tender: I would walk half across the world to stand again on the hard stones of Chartres.

To Canal my heart has given one name: the Highway of Heaven.

The new streets are not heavy with dreams: but the old streets belong to me: they understand me: they keep my secrets: they clothe me in nobility: they wrap me in mystery.

New Orleans streets . . . flaming noon, white night: beating rains: misery of the lost: painted palaces and parrots and black nuns and cool courtyards: magnolias and garlic and cemeteries: beloved of the gods.

Commerce may trundle over: a newer generation may coat you with fresh lacquer: but I should know you through a thousand reincarnations . . . . rough as the road to Calvary . . . but the one precious shrine of my heart.

John O'Keefe, The Blacksmith

By MARGRETTA SCOTT LAWLER

HE had not slept well the night before,—there was a pain across his head like a band pulled too tightly—but now gazing into the fires of the forge he forgot the pain in his head. It was not the forge into which he gazed but the fires of hell and there writhing in the flames were the poor souls. He had thought of them often, these poor souls, thought and ached to help them, to give them the drop of water for which they pleaded, the drop which they imagined would for the instant assuage their everlasting thirst. Now there they writhed and twisted before him, praying, crying, moaning. And he, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, would help them. Leaning forward on the bench he extended both arms, his gentle face, with its light blue eyes and tawn-colored hair, aglow.

Mrs. Jenkins coming into the shop to have her horse shod found him so.

"Good morning, Mr. O'Keefe," she said politely and started when he rose and held up both hands in the way Father Neville did when he said Mass. However he always was a curious man though the best blacksmith they had ever had in the town. "Nellie needs shoeing," she told him, ignoring the upraised hands, and motioned to the gray mare waiting outside the shop in the heat of the July noon.

"Mrs. Jenkins," he remonstrated gently, "you speak to the Son of God, Jesus Christ, the Redeemer come to save the world."

His smile was so uplifted, his eyes so benign, that even the timid Mrs. Jenkins had no fear for her personal safety, but with a quick glance towards the door she muttered something unintelligible and hastened away to tell Father Neville and the doctor, newly arrived in the community, how strange John O'Keefe was talking and acting.

The two men accompanied her back to the shop where, with eyes bulging from a fearful curiosity, she left them with the blacksmith who knelt at prayer before the forge, his face with the closed eyes, the moving lips, illuminated by its fierce glow. At the sound of footsteps his trembling fingers pointed to the leaping flames.

"See the poor souls in torment," he cried pityingly and turning his head recognized the priest. "Ah, father, you are helpless to save them, but I can save them, I am the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world."

"Yes, yes, my son," replied the priest, "but we must not think too much of these poor souls. We are in this life now." He looked at the physician, his hands on the blacksmith's shoulder. "Doctor Porter, I want you to meet one of my best parishioners, John O'Keefe, also the best—"

The blacksmith interrupted with a gesture of command.

"I am not John O'Keefe—I am the Son of God."

"We had better get him home," the priest spoke behind his hand and at

the doctor's nod took the blacksmith by the arm and led him unresisting out of the shop.

Quietly he went to the little white cottage with the green shutters and the friendly chickens wandering about the yard. With dignity he offered his guests chairs on the porch but he himself with folded arms stood looking down at them. His gaze, suddenly piercing, fastened upon the doctor.

"Have you repented of your sins? Are you prepared to meet the death that might be awaiting you this hour, the death that comes like a thief in the night?"

"I sincerely repent of my sins," the doctor replied humbly, "and I am now going into the house to confess to this priest, your disciple. Wait here 'till I return."

"Father, I thank you for this new soul," the blacksmith whispered and stood motionless with bowed head.

From the window of the stuffy little parlor with its red plush chairs the doctor looked out at the tall thin figure on the porch.

"I'll slip out the back way and telephone the asylum," he remarked casually and left the priest alone to wonder about the strange ways in which God manifested himself.

As the gray ambulance with the clanging bell stopped before the cottage the blacksmith raised worried eyes.

"Is anyone sick?" he asked the priest who waited beside him.

"My son," replied the priest, "there is no one sick here, but I want you to go where there are a great many sick, sick in soul, you understand, and you can heal them."

The orderly took his arm and together they walked down the cinder path sun-splashed and dazzling in the heat of the July day, the blacksmith in his haste to help the sick souls pulling the orderly with him.

And before the gray ambulance with the clanging bell had left the town and had reached that house of dreams gone astray its occupant had become famous. One might say he left the town and entered the town at the same time. Sane he was a non-entity; insane, a personage. His doings and sayings, before ignored, were on every tongue. Next to the doctor and the priest, Mrs. Jenkins was the most sought after for reports of what had happened

The old women, with many shakes of their heads, said he had gazed into the fires of his forge too long, had prayed too long, brooding over the sins and sufferings of his fellow creatures. The young women said he had not paid sufficient heed to them, never had John O'Keefe had a sweetheart, that is excepting his mother with whom he had lived in the little cottage with the green shutters until death had removed her to a smaller and narrower house. The young men with many sly winks agreed with the girls, but with variations. The old men thought it would never have happened if he had taken a wee drop now and then, for this was before the age of prohibition. And the doctor agreed with all their views as he expressed quite plainly to Father Neville one evening in that reverent gentleman's parlor where they sat discussing this most worthy parishioner, John O'Keefe, the blacksmith.

"I never knew a better man," said the priest and fingered the crucifix which hung from about his neck. "There

was no worthier soul in my flock. He lived for God and His Church."

And the man of science had remonstrated with narrowing eyes.

"Father Neville, nature is strongly opposed to one-channel minds whether they lead to God or to the devil. If your friend had had some natural, normal outlet this would not have happened."

"God's ways are not ours," replied the priest and prayed for a better understanding of these devious ways.

The little cottage with the green shutters was closed and soon a For Rent sign appeared on the front door; the wandering chickens were persuaded to wander into other and more profitable back yards; another and a less desirable blacksmith was installed. Other eyes, not so blue and childlike in their unsophistication, gazed into the fires of the forge and saw strangely different pictures.

And while the little village spoke of John O'Keefe as of someone who was dead he lived a life as intense as the hot flames that roared up to the blackened rafters of what had once been his shop. In that high, square, red brick building with its barred windows through which peered the cunning faces of the insane he prayed and wept and wrestled and rejoiced.

With the unfailing logic of the insane, a logic which starts with a false premise, he lived again the life of Christ. His bench, where they put him to making cane backs and seats for chairs, was the carpenter's bench of the Nazarene, and all around him were those sick souls he had come to save. Except for rare intervals when he fought the evil one who came to tempt him, as Christ had been tempted, he was quiet and peaceable. His hair and beard long, his slender fingers always clasped in prayer, he came to look like the pictures of Christ. Everyone loved him, the doctors, nurses, the patients themselves, though they laughed and put their fingers to their heads.

When visitors came to the institution he was always brought forward to meet them and they went away followed by the haunting sweetness of his face. He realized fully his surroundings and the condition of the other patients. Accompanying visitors through the halls he would point out the glassless pictures bolted to the walls, the heavy weights fastened to the tables.

"It is necessary to do these things," he would explain, "for the people here are crazy. You see that woman there sewing—she makes shrouds all day for her dead son."

Passing the woman he would raise his hands in benediction and mutter a blessing.

After he had been incarcerated six months he awakened one night and thought of his chickens. Who was feeding his chickens? Sitting up straight in bed he stared down the dimly-lighted ward and listened to the restless sighings of his companions as they turned in their sleep. What was he doing here? Clasping a blanket about his thin shoulders he put his hand to his head where no longer a band pulled too tightly. Who was doing his work at the blacksmith shop, who was keeping up the fires of his forge?

The doctors consulting said he was again a sane man and could no longer be held as an inmate of the asylum. The week in which he waited for his discharge was hell, compressed and run-

ning over, the poor souls he had watched writhing in his forge fires could not have suffered more than he.

To be sane and in a mad house! To know that he had been one of those mumbling, whispering men living in the unreal world of a diseased imagination! To know that the glassless pictures bolted to the walls, the tables with the heavy weights, the soap cut into bits, for even soap can be a missile, had been for him! To know that the smiles, half pitying, half superior, on the faces of the sane watching their cursed brethren had been inspired by him! To know that the four close walls of the asylum would be succeeded by the four close walls of a little town where he would be greeted furtively, the odour of the mad house still about him! To know that he would never be like other men who had not seen his visions, heard his voices!

In that week of waiting for his discharge he neither ate nor slept. When the woman who had made shrouds for her dead son peered up at him and grinned, "How are you, Jesus Christ?" he answered her with flushing face, "I am John O'Keefe, the blacksmith," and hurried down the hall to escape her tittering.

To the patients, the nurses, the orderlies, the physicians, the office force, he explained hesitatingly, apologetically:

"I had a strange idea in my head here," touching his forehead with his finger, "but it has passed. I know now that I am John O'Keefe, the blacksmith."

He repeated it over and over again, "John O'Keefe, the blacksmith," as if the very sound of the words would wipe out that other blasphemous picture. He talked incessantly of his forge, his cottage with the green shutters, his wandering chickens.

Slowly, tortuously the day of his departure arrived and the whole staff of the institution assembled in the office to tell him goodbye. Neatly dressed in a blue suit, a soft gray hat in his hand, he looked into the friendly faces about him, his thin cheeks flushed, his gentle eyes eager. Slowly he bent over the desk to sign his paper of discharge and wrote "Jesus Christ, the Son of God."

An Encounter in Hades

By GORDON LAWRENCE

I had forgotten, lady, long ago
Whether you lived, or I loved any maid.
Now passionless, a thousand years a shade
Beside the river where dark waters flow,
You, little ghost, but half-remembered yet,
Have waked old sweetness, and old infinite regret.

Jenny Was a Jewel

By BRAVIG IMBS

Jenny was a jewel, there were none to deny it
She lived with her father and her father would stand by it;
He said she was a jewel and he loved her very much,
They both loved each other very very much.
(And the grasses blow in the wind.)

Jenny was a neat one, ev'ryone opined so
She kept up her cottage and the cottage floor would shine so;
She baked and she brewed and she loved to very much,
She really loved to housekeep very very much.
(And the grasses blow in the wind.)

Jenny was an odd one but people didn't mind her
She never had a lover and it seemed no man would find her,
She bustled and she hustled and she never left the house,
Except to market mornings she never left the house.
(And the grasses blow in the wind.)

Jenny was a good girl, ev'ry one had said so
But when she heard them say this she tossed her little head so,
She played and she laughed with the children 'round the house,
Except to play with children she never left the house.
(And the grasses blow in the wind.)

Jenny was so happy, no one could have missed it
And Jenny touched her cheek as though someone had kissed it,
For she had met a sailor when she was buying fish,
She never talked to sailors except when buying fish.
(And the grasses blow in the wind.)

Jenny had a sweetheart and rumours told about it
But the sailor was a bad man so her friends could not but doubt it,
Yet Jenny's eyes sparkled when she was buying fish
And the sailor's eyes glistened when he sold her fish.
(And the grasses blow in the wind.)

Jenny was a daft girl and this was the reason
The sailor went to sea when it was whaling season,
And she waited and she watched but he never came back,
She strained her eyes in watching but he never came back.
(And the grasses blow in the wind.)

Jenny was a jewel, though many would deny it,
But her father was a wise man and he stood by it;
For Jenny left one night and never came back,
Went to the sea-side and never came back.
(And the grasses blow in the wind.)

Toward The North Pole

By LOUIS GILMORE

Bleak is the Arctic ice
Better to stalk the Pole
From near the equator

Under a mango tree
Focus the mind's eye North

White on environing white
The point eludes

But capped with slab
Or crowned with obelisk
The Aurora Borealis colors it with lights

Already
Summer tourists plod toward it
With guide and alpenstocks

Verse Old And Nascent:

A Pilgrimage

By WILLIAM FAULKNER

AT the age of sixteen, I discovered Swinburne. Or rather, Swinburne discovered me, springing from some tortured undergrowth of my adolescence, like a highwayman, making me his slave. My mental life at that period was so completely and smoothly veneered with surface insincerity—obviously necessary to me at that time, to support intact my personal integrity—that I can not tell to this day exactly to what depth he stirred me, just how deeply the footprints of his passage are left in my mind. It seems to me now that I found him nothing but a flexible vessel into which I might put my own vague emotional shapes without breaking them. It was years later that I found in him much more than bright and bitter sound, more than a satisfying tinsel of blood and death and gold and the inevitable sea. True, I dipped into Shelley and Keats—who doesn't, at that age?—but they did not move me.

I do not think it was assurance so much, merely complacence and a youthful morbidity, which counteracted them and left me cold. I was not interested in verse for verse's sake then. I read and employed verse, firstly, for the purpose of furthering various philanderings in which I was engaged, secondly, to complete a youthful gesture I was then making, of being "different" in a small town. Later, my concupiscence waning, I turned inevitably to verse, finding therein an emotional counterpart far more satisfactory for two reasons: (1) No partner was required (2) It was so much simpler just to close a book, and take a walk. I do not mean by this that I ever found anything sexual in Swinburne: there is no sex in Swinburne. The mathematician, surely; and eroticism just as there is eroticism in form and color and movement wherever found. But not that tortured sex in—say— D. H. Lawrence.

It is a time-honored custom to read Omar to one's mistress as an accompaniment to consummation—a sort of stringed obligato among the sighs. I found that verse could be employed not only to temporarily blind the spirit to the ungraceful posturings of the flesh, but also to speed onward the whole affair. Ah, women, with their hungry snatching little souls! With a man it is—quite often—art for art's sake; with a woman it is always art for the artist's sake.

Whatever it was that I found in Swinburne, it completely satisfied me and filled my inner life. I cannot understand now how I could have regarded the others with such dull complacency. Surely, if one be moved at all by Swinburne he must inevitably find in Swinburne's forerunners some kinship. Perhaps it is that Swinburne, having taken his heritage and elaborated it to the despair of any would-be

poet, has coarsened it to tickle the dullest of palates as well as the most discriminating, as used water can be drunk by both hogs and gods.

Therefore, I believe I came as near as possible to approaching poetry with an unprejudiced mind. I was subject to the usual proselyting of an older person, but the strings were pulled so casually as scarcely to influence my point of view. I had no opinions at that time, the opinions I later formed were all factitious and were discarded. I approached Poetry unawed, as if to say; "Now, let's see what you have." Having used verse, I would now allow verse to use me if it could.

When the co-ordinated chaos of the war was replaced by the unco-ordinated chaos of peace I took seriously to reading verse. With no background whatever I joined the pack belling loudly after contemporary poets. I could not always tell what it was all about but "This is the stuff," I told myself, believing, like so many, that if one cried loudly enough to be heard above the din, and so convinced others that one was "in the know," one would be automatically accoladed. I joined an emotional B. P. O. E.

The beauty—spiritual and physical—of the South lies in the fact that God has done so much for it and man so little. I have this for which to thank whatever gods may be: that having fixed my roots in this soil all contact, saving by the printed word, with contemporary poets is impossible.

That page is closed to me forever. I read Robinson and Frost with pleasure, and Aldington; Conrad Aiken's minor music still echoes in my heart; but beyond these, that period might have never been. I no longer try to read the others at all.

It was "The Shropshire Lad" which closed the period. I found a paper-bound copy in a bookshop and when I opened it I discovered there the secret after which the moderns course howling like curs on a cold trail in a dark wood, giving off, it is true, an occasional note clear with beauty, but curs just the same. Here was reason for being born into a fantastic world: discovering the splendor of fortitude, the beauty of being of the soil like a tree about which fools might howl and which winds of disillusion and death and despair might strip, leaving it bleak, without bitterness; beautiful in sadness.

From this point the road is obvious, Shakespeare I read, and Spencer, and the Elizabethans, and Shelley and Keats. I read "Thou still unravished bride of quietness" and found a still water withal strong and potent, quiet with its own strength, and satisfying as bread. That beautiful awareness, so sure of its own power that it is not necessary to create the illusion of force by frenzy and motion. Take the odes to a Nightingale, to a Grecian urn, "Music to hear," etc.; here is the spiritual beauty which the moderns strive vainly for with trickery, and yet beneath it one knows are entrails; masculinity.

Occasionally I see modern verse in magazines. In four years I have found but one cause of interest; a tendency among them to revert to formal rhymes and conventional forms again. Have they, too, seen the writing on the wall? Can one still hope? Or is this age, this

decade, impossible for the creation of poetry? Is there nowhere among us a Keats in embryo, someone who will tune his lute to the beauty of the world? Life is not different from what it was when Shelley drove like a swallow southward from the unbearable English winter; living may be different, but not life. Time changes us, but Time's self does not change. Here is the same air, the same sunlight in which Shelly dreamed of golden men and women immortal in a silver world and in which young John Keats wrote "Endymion" trying to gain enough silver to marry Fannie Brawne and set up an apothecary's shop. Is not there among us someone who can write something beautiful and passionate and sad instead of saddening?

To A Jacobean

By BEULAH MAY

One cloudy day threatening rain,
Coming home early from the hunt
And warming yourself by the fire in your chamber
While your man combed your wig and set out small sword and ruff,
You arranged in your mind certain verses
That had beat themselves out in the rush and pound of the chase,
And calling for ink and quill
Hastily set them down in indifferent spelling.

Certain lords came to dine
And you drinking deeply the verses were forgotten.
But the chambermaid, good soul,
Who considered all writing black magic,
Gingerly placed them in your secretary.

Here one day your daughter's husband,
(You having long been food for worms),
Looking for a blank sheet of paper, found them,
And having a pretty taste had them given to the world
Where they gained much favor with certain elderly persons
Who remembered your charm and their own lost youth.

That is the past. Now all we have of you
Are these fugitive lines,
One scant day of your life.

Pie Powder Court

By JOSEPH T. SHIPLEY

Dear Nepenthe:

Out of the murmurs of Merrie England, echoing along the pages of Peacock, rising over broad meadow and farmland in the visions of Morris, or dancing down the sunny days in the ballads that then were rousing chanted, do you remember the gathering sounds of the English fair? The restless champing of cattle driven in for sale, amidst the loud bargaining of countryman and townsman; the gossip of housewives over their greens; the noisy play of children, subsiding toward eve in the muted sweethearting of twilight, to rouse again with the frolicking of the dark? Through the tumult, the cries of itinerant pedlars, Autolycus showing his lawn as white as driven snow, his pins and poking-sticks of steel; and the ragamuffin mendicants who sought to glean of the universal joy—do you remember the colorful, clamorous fair?

And on its outskirts, hurriedly, harshly, called on a knave's utterance throwing a thief to the hangman, have you ever observed that more sinister, businesslike group, the summary justices of the fair, drawn to dispose of the dusty-foot journeyers? Time has mellowed the robber to a Robin Hood, has shriveled his judge to a caricature; yet the olden squire in hot earnest fulfilled the duty of the landowner against the vagabonds of *le pied poudreux*—brief the questioning and few the guiltless in the days of the Pie Powder Court.

GLADLY

I

He trudged from dawn till fall of night
A long road, awearyO;
He'd thoughts to leave behind, but they
Clung heavily upon his way;
He hoped that neath the pall of night
Dreamless would lie the day
Of his long road, awearyO.

It was a damsel he had loved
A gay road, acheeryO.
Of lily and of hollyhock
They twined a laughing lover's-lock;
But she turned from the callant she had loved
When riches came to knock
For a gay road, acheeryO.

And how might he forget the day,
A long road, awearyO,
She smiled, and, turning from his eye,
Held him her hand to bid good-bye?
And how might he offset the day
While blue was in the sky
Of a long road, awearyO.

In cockers of cordowin and freeze-grey cloak,
In gallant-gloves of bauson-skin and wide sow's-poke,
He leered at all the gaudy maids,
He chucked the giggling bawdy maids,
He eyed the creaking wagons of the merchant folk
Afairing.

Drink's not worth a lonely lowse if lasses there be none,
But there's merrier time for a carouse when work at hand is done.
He slipped among the bustling folk,
He jostled through the hustling folk,
And many a purse was empty ere its owner had begun
Afairing.

Days are lean and life is short
For those who deal with the Pie Powder Court.
He laughed a moment to the sky;
He looked the judges in the eye:
"To her and the mummery world, goodbye!"
"Death," said the Pie Powder Court.
Mercy on him that can but hie
A long road, awearyO.

II

GUILTY

Callan the dreamer-gypsy would lie by the pool and ponder,
For Springtime made him tipsy with its fragrance and its wonder;
The meaning of the frogs he caught, the tales of shining pebbles,
And he knew every birdling thought in pipings and in trebles
With a tripsy gypsy leery o walyO.

With a butterfly ajourneying he cast his fancies wide,
With cricket armies tourneying he charged and lunged and shied;
He shook the bluebells till they rang with peals of hoyden laughter,
The daffydills with Springtime sang, but Callan he was dafter
With a tripsy gypsy leery o walyO.

He plucked and split a blade of grass to read his fortune by,
The pool was deep and clear as glass; such crystals do not lie:
The water ruffled with a cloud, the blade of grass broke short . . .
From Mother Maisie's punnet someone stole her choicest ware,
And of course the gypsy'd done it, slinking unseen from the fair,
Cried the triumphant haling crowd at the Pie Powder Court
With a tripsy gypsy leery o walyO.

III

FEALTY

Peter now hurry, now run to the fair,
For a riband for Polly to bind in her hair.
The morris dance is waiting, all for its forest-queen;
Why are you still atarryin'?
For she's to be Maid Marian,
Yes, she's to dance Maid Marian,
All with a riband green.

Why do you dawdle so? Run from the fair
With a flowing riband, bright for Polly's hair.
The Morris dance has gathered, without its drooping queen,
Why are you still atarryin'?
She is to be maid Marian,
They're calling for Maid Marian,
All with a riband green.

Ribands in empty pokes are not to be found,
But she cannot be queen with her tresses unbound.
The morris dance has started—but Peter's theft was seen:
She is a fair Maid Marian,
A lightsome, lovely Marian—
But Peter will dance as carrion,
All for a riband green.

Mouse

By GORDON LAWRENCE

The mouse is indeed dead.
He is a disappointment to the cat who pats his flanks with sheathed claws,
Seeking to renew the game in which he has forever lost interest.

He has returned to darkness, this mouse
Whose world was darkness,
Who was a tuskless minotaur, denizen of incalculable mazes,
A Form, a Shape in a world of things unseen and creatures without color,
A scurrying of legs, a palpitating of scared ribs in tunnels.
In their ceiling subways and their water-pipe viaducts,
Mice, white whiskers bristling,
Vague and imminent ghosts, bound through their narrow caves,
And in friendly caverns of woodpiles and forgotten closets,
Black snouts crinkling,
Approach furry spouses.

The cat licks clean paws with decision,
Ignoring the white lids sliding over the stiffening eyeballs.

The Alchemist

By JOHN McCLURE

Porphyry Arsano, Petronius Amphax, Eusebius Scaurus, Metrodorus Astyanax and an Alchemist are discovered in a laboratory. There is a great deal of glassware to be seen, many of the vessels being full of brilliant fluids, and a quantity of paraphernalia.

METRODORUS: This is much ado for small pay. You could get ahead better at pottery-making. What is the object in so many glass bottles?

THE ALCHEMIST: The advancement of understanding.

PORPHYRY: All knowledge is valuable, Metrodorus.

METRODORUS: But what is the use of so many tureens?

THE ALCHEMIST: Each has its purpose.

PORPHYRY: All forms are significant.

PETRONIUS: They say you are examining the generation of energy.

METRODORUS: That one with the crooked neck and the fat belly must signify something humorous.

THE ALCHEMIST: That is true, Petronius Amphax. I have been attempting to explode an atom. Once one of these points is exploded and harnessed, we can with the power build huge pyramids in a twinkle and drive tremendous ploughs that will dig canals in one furrow.

EUSEBIUS: When so much energy as that is put at our service there will be no need for anyone to work any more. I suppose then we will all loll about and make verses.

THE ALCHEMIST: That is the idea. We can do as we please.

METRODORUS: That would be jolly.

PORPHYRY: Has it occurred to you that if you succeed in exploding an atom the world would blow up?

THE ALCHEMIST: That is contingency I had not prepared for, but your point is well taken.

METRODORUS: In that case we would do better to go on working.

EUSEBIUS: Possibly the energy of the atom has been exaggerated.

THE ALCHEMIST: On the contrary, it is primordial. The gas of existence is solidified in the atom. It is the basis of form, the archetype of the urge. Porphyry Arsano detects in these experiments a very real danger. The breaking down of the atom may mean the annihilation of form. And with the destruction of form, we would have the simultaneous extinction of the idea of extension, which carries with it the idea of time. Nothing would remain then, not even the Original Digit.

PORPHYRY: You travel too fast, and prove yourself ignorant of the genesis of number. Unity cannot explode. The Original Digit, which possesses all faculties, became aware of itself, stirring in its timeless repose by imagining an ideal reflection of that which it is. This reflection, being purely ideal, does not partake of substance, and is symbolized by the unreal numeral "two." There is no sequence, as has been point-

ed out, between One and Two, for the first is substantial, the latter illusory. The apparition of the illusory numeral Two introduces into existence the equally unreal appearance of motion which is extension, which is form. All these are ideal and do not partake of substance. Nevertheless the uncreated law of coherence binds together the Original Digit and the phantasmal numeral Two, and the ideal element, extension, which fills the cavity between the Original Digit and its reflection in the waters of nothing, is symbolized by the numeral Three. Three, as you divine, is the unreal but inevitable offspring of One and Two. And that is the genesis of number, for thence into the quadrillions, mathematics is merely recurrent, returning to the unreal but edifying symbol of unity, the numeral Four, working itself out ideally in rhythmical quaternaries. For you must realize that the numeral Four is the symbol of unity conditioned by the uncreated law of coherence, which binds the Original Digit, the phantasm Two and the symbol of extension into a compact sphere. At four we begin over evolving a new cycle, and unity recurs in symbol at Seven, which has magical powers. With each quarternary, it is understood we retreat farther from substance. If you explode the atom and with it the world, you will only have annihilated the symbolical numeral Four, an ideal phantasm. You will not have damaged the Original Digit.

METRODORUS: This is enough to make a man tear his hair. Digits is nothing to me.

EUSEBIUS: You would not make a good Pythagorean, Metrodorus. Besides, you have sold your soul to the—

METRODORUS: There is no need to be mentioning names. I know who you mean. Digits is nothing to him.

PORPHYRY: He is symbolized by the numeral Two. He is not evil as has been imagined, merely unreal—an imaginary conception of opposition and contrast.

THE ALCHEMIST: You refer to the fiend?

METRODORUS: Unfortunately.

THE ALCHEMIST: The fiend is that which is impermanent.

PORPHYRY: However, to return to our chickens, it was merely a pleasantry to suggest that the explosion of an atom would destroy the apparitional world. That is possible, to be sure, but very unlikely. In the world of numbers there exist an infinity of images, which is to say that all things seen and unseen slumber in Possibility, and the atom is but one of them. Nothing exists in fact but substance. All things conceivable and inconceivable exist ideally, under the uncreated law of Possibility, conditioned by the uncreated law of coherence or harmony, and we need not deny the apparitional existence of hobgoblins, devils or angels. They may appear, and most brilliantly, like the sun, which is also a phantasm. But they lack substance, exactly as we do.

METRODORUS: You speak as if you was drunk. What-a-devil is substance?

PORPHYRY: Whatever you please. It makes no difference how we symbolize it in speech, by matter or spirit, butter or phosphorous. Those who say that the world is all cheese are referring to the same substance as those who call it a spook. They mean the same thing, but speak in two languages. And when they quarrel bitterly, it is as fool-

ish as a Roman and an Abyssinian debating over the proper name for beefsteak.

EUSEBIUS: Substance, whatever else it is, is aware of itself.

PORPHYRY: It arrives at self-consciousness through number, and, as I have demonstrated, number is illusory. Consciousness, therefore, is illusory, and if we were churchmen, we would say that the fiend had a hand in it. Consciousness is merely the relationship between reality and an appearance or between two appearances. The Original Digit reposes in dreamless or timeless sleep. Consciousness follows upon the genesis of number under the uncreated law of coherence. It is symbolized by the numeral Three, as I have said, which is the digit of relationship between One and Two, the principle of extension which binds them together. Consciousness is only a form of dialectics, Eusebius Scaurus, and your apparent existence is as much outside as inside. Your person is a fabric of counteractions, ideal and illusory, and not partaking of substance. The numeral Three which is confused with the Godhead is not the Original Digit. It is merely the symbolical representation of God in the world, the name, in short, of the Holy Ghost, which will explode when the world does.

THE ALCHEMIST: I have here a bottle of atoms. I shall place two or three in a crucible, add henbane, kindle a flame underneath, and mash them.

METRODORUS: Do you think they are likely to burst?

THE ALCHEMIST: That is my expectation.

EUSEBIUS: Perhaps it would be just as well if we stood at the other end of the room.

THE ALCHEMIST retreats to one corner of the laboratory, his guests to another. He removes three pellets from the bottle with a fine pair of pincers, and drops them gingerly into a crucible. He then adds henbane, lights a spirit-lamp underneath, takes up a pestle and exerts pressure on the melting material.

METRODORUS: We cannot be of any real help to him.

EUSEBIUS: I believe it would be advisable to leave these things as they are.

METRODORUS: This is all foolishness. I think I will be on my way home.

PORPHYRY: There is no need to be alarmed. He is attempting the impossible. Nothing will come of it.

There is a sudden pop. The ALCHEMIST vanishes.

METRODORUS: Now he has done it. I could have told him this is what would happen.

EUSEBIUS: Where was he blown to? I am a little dazed.

PETRONIUS: Well, he has paid a good price for making an ass of himself. We should not have come here. Now we will be accused of the murder.

EUSEBIUS: But what has occurred?

PORPHYRY: It is quite simple. He exploded an atom. But instead of exploding with terrific energy externally into space, it unfortunately exploded internally into the fourth dimension He was drawn in by the suction.

PETRONIUS: This is terrible. I suppose there is nothing we can do about it.

PORPHYRY: Nothing except burn candles for him in the Temple of Isis. We can give thanks also that this atom did not release itself in our direction, else we would none of us be here to burn any candles.

METRODORUS: Well, he was a martyr to science, if that is any pleasure to him now. He will not suffer from tooth-ache any more.

EUSEBIUS: We had best be going.

Porphyry Arsano, Eusebius Scaurus, Petronius Amphax and Metrodorus Astyanax depart with bowed heads.

Brain

By J. HAMILTON BASSO

My brain is a white hound
Running a race in the moonlight . . .
Leaving a trail in his wake
Of flakéd firelight,

There are dark and eerie places
Veiled with cob-web laces
And the silken wings
Of purple dragon-flies
Where creep strange things
In a fog of memories.

My brain is a slender hound
Running a race with the moonlight
Bearing a thought in his teeth
Back to the foaming firelight.

Then he sniffs off again
In silence . . . perhaps in pain.

Anchorite

By MARIAN NEVIN FUNK

He thought to scorn
The ancient mesh
Of beauty integrate
In flesh,

Abjure the golden rote
Of lips and eyes and throat
And the unopulent rare
Metal of Phyllis hair.

But on a winter night
In carven frost and light
Upon his window pane
Helen gleamed again.

Mandate of Eros:
A Retrospect

By TONY PALMER

Now sputters the final flare;
Beneath the mind's ruin
His body's usual thin
Laughter declines the dare.

The heart bullies the mind;
Thought rots away;
The core sulks and the grey
Winds leave the heart blind.

His passionless life
Flows against the dawn.
The grave hand withdrawn,
Has left the knife.

A New Literary Departure

By R. W. WESTERN

MR. BERNARD GILBERT is engaged upon the construction of a vehicle for the expression of artistic emotion, which, if it fulfill all he aims at, amounts to the invention of a new art in letters.

Departures of this kind are seldom successful, as many recent examples in music, painting, poetry, and other forms of literature, suffice to illustrate. Too often those who attempt them, do so in despair of emulating the masterpieces extant in forms already accepted: this motive is inadequate and carries the seeds of its own frustration. Mr. Gilbert is better instigated: his guiding motive, he tells us: "is to present things neither as they might have been, nor as I should like them to be, but as they are." Now this motive may be adequate—at least there is nothing in it to defeat his purpose. He is now so far advanced with his project as to have issued seven books out of the series of a dozen or more, which he considers necessary to complete it. All have found some favour in the eyes of a number of readers: it is therefore time to consider the nature of the innovation with attention. He himself has very definite ideas on the character of the departures upon which he is embarked: and we had best begin with an account of his project, which shall be as far as possible in his own words.

Mr. Gilbert wishes to show the English rural scene in which he grew to maturity as *one*:—the roadman on the stone heap, the ploughman in the field, the farmer in the market, the child at school, the landowner in his mansion, the merchant at his business, and "the whole district astir with that incessant movement which is Life." He wishes to present it all in a crystal globe so that the reader may be aware of the whole at once. So far his project does not depart from that of other authors in the past: many writers have taken a rural scene for the subject of a work of art and in-so-far as they have not been able to present it as one they failed. But he goes on to tell us; he hopes by the joint effect of these books, to place the reader in the position of an inhabitant of his rural scene:—"The whole series, as it shapes itself in my mind, forms a single work of about a million words which is to place the reader in the position of an inhabiatnt of the district of Bly between—roughly—the years 1913 and 1918. I design he shall know everything about his own village of Fletton, nearly everything about the surrounding villages; and that he shall also know such folk of the market town of Bly as he would normally meet or hear about." The full significance of these few words will be better appreciated if we add, that the first of the books, that which presents the village of Fletton alone, is equipped with a village directory comprising some 500 names and genealogical trees to the number of 52. He says: "The people, the villages, the farms, and the whole district are present to me as I write, and when the reader, having finished my last volume begins again

to read the completed work, I hope that a like intimacy will be his." Certainly it is not a design one could expect to see or realise within the compass of a single book. He continues: "For the attainment of my end, each volume, while complete in itself, has been allotted an appropriate part to be fulfilled. No previous writer, so far as I am aware has set this particular object before him, so that I have been able to obtain but little guidance as to the best means of attainment, and before deciding what method was best suited to my purpose I was obliged to examine all known forms of literary expression. I concluded that the different aspects to be presented in the several volumes of my series, needed different methods to properly present them. Some of these are comparatively new and possibly unfamiliar to the reader. Some are entirely novel." New aims require new methods, and since the rural scene presents its inhabitants in many aspects the usual literary forms are not adapted to express, it is not surprising that Mr. Gilbert should seek for new forms of expression, in attempting to compass his very magnificent aims. The first book of the series is an example: it offers the thought which each person in the village of Fletton might be expected to be thinking at a given moment, in rhythmic utterance. Then come the plays, the poems, the novel and the tales, the moving pictures and the symposium to be followed by the Letters, the Adventures, the Reminiscences, the History, the Wanderings, the Dream and the Pageant. Thus while all the books are to deal with the same district, at the same period, and are therefore concerned with the same inhabitants, every book is intended to present these people in a different set of relations to each other by help of the literary form best adapted to present it.

The qualifications of the author for carrying out this intention are set out in the preface of the book already referred to, and elsewhere. The following is a recent statement: "It is now many years since it was first borne in upon me that my mission in life was to present the part of rural England, in which I grew to maturity, as it was given to me to see it. I have already devoted to the purpose twenty-five years of observation and study, and several years in actual production; the task of my election is now half completed—for thirty years I lived in such a district; farming, carrying on an agricultural business, waging political campaigns, helping to found the successful Farmers' Union, failing to spread an agricultural Labours Union, and sharing in the social, administrative, business and artistic life, of the community. I knew all the parishes well, and several of them very intimately, and there were few local inhabitants with whom I was unacquainted. I spent innumerable hours in cottages and farmhouse kitchens, in cobblers and barber shops, and inns; playing football and cricket, swimming, skating and fishing with small-holders and laborers; coursing, shooting, and riding with farmers, attending fairs, shows, markets, dances, concerts, lectures, plays, political meetings, local councils, religious services, and all those gatherings that form so large a part of country life. It is this thronging hive, this pulsating life, which I am segregating as in a crystal

globe." Thus it is evident that the project upon which Mr. Gilbert is engaged makes a considerable departure from the beaten path of literary endeavor.

Artists in literature have hitherto found that they must carefully limit the field of their efforts, in any work, in order to obtain that unity of effect essential to art of whatever kind; just as an artist in paint must limit his canvas; they usually find it necessary to restrict themselves, to one epoch, one situation, one sort of action, or in all these respects: and although the literary artist will always endeavor to put his reader in the position of an inhabitant of the district he writes of, in respect of the principal characters, scenes and incidents he deals with; he is only able to do this by limiting them in number; if there be more than a few, the supernumeraries must be no more than is connoted by that word, otherwise there is danger that the unity will cease. Mr. Gilbert, however, wants to present the whole rural theme as it is to an inhabitant, and he wants to present it as one. Can he have both one and all? Does not an attempt to compass the two together, of necessity exclude an artistic intention? On the answer to this, seems to rest the possibility of success to his project.

It is true the project is not necessarily an artistic project; he does not definitely say so; nor does the motive of presenting things as they are and not as one would like them to be, necessarily fructify in a work of art. Even though every single book in the series be accepted as an artistic success, that is no reason why the series as a whole should be so regarded. However, the series may present a unity of some other sort; this alternative must be considered. A collection of pictures, each as fine as you like, is not itself a work of art; it may, nevertheless, have a unity of its own, and one which does not hurt the beauty of the pictures. If, for instance, the pictures be arranged so as to manifest an artistic truth, exemplified in the history of painting or in distinctions of contemporary schools; that is a unity imposed by the spirit of truth, rather than by the spirit of beauty by which the several works are, by hypothesis, inspired. Moreover, there are other kinds of unity: literature has wider aims than art. The books of Euclid; Newton's Principia; The Report of the Geddes Committee on National Expenditure; the Book of Mormon, are all examples of literature that possess a certain unity of their own. Even the Official Intelligence of the London Stock Exchange has a striking unity to those whose vocation obliges them to be acquainted with its contents. So we have to consider what sort of unity the whole rural scene may present to an inhabitant thereof. Now, an actual inhabitant of a rural district, of necessity knows "all about" the people who live in it, and their goings on; this is why their conversations, however tiresome to outsiders, are so interesting to each other. 'Simon Meadows met Mary Hodson in the lane yesterday and spoke to her, and James Barlow was there, looking on,' may be statements of consuming interest to those to whom they are addressed; but it is given to few of the inhabitants of a district to see all such facts as one, that is to say, as parts of any whole. It needs some sort of magic to weld the

mass of such information into an intelligible unity, of whatever kind; no mere method will suffice.

Unity in presentation is not to be achieved by merely observing the unities of time and place and action; as is illustrated hourly in the crowded streets of London. Unity must first be established in the mind; there can be no unity of presentation unless, in the mind of the observer, there is at-one-ment of being: moreover, of the several kinds of unity possible to an inhabitant of a district, not every kind will serve. A man in a violent passion achieves a certain unity, for he becomes blind and deaf to everything but the object of his fury. A man with a defined and all-devouring p u r p o s e achieves unity of another kind, in that he apprehends nothing save in relation to his purpose, ignoring all else. Such a one we have, depicted in Tyler of Barnet, who gives his name for a title to a novel which stands third in the series of books we consider. Tyler is one of those men whose character it is, to be always governed by some fixed, all-devouring purpose; not necessarily the same throughout life, but one not to be superseded until after it is attained or is within sight of attainment. At first his purpose is to get on in the world, and he does so to the sacrifice of all else; the whole district is one to him, because he sees everything in relation to this purpose; but at fifty he falls in love; everything his world contains, is then subordinated to this new purpose, so that he becomes oblivious to all else; and events now move on, with the inevitability of Greek tragedy, to final disaster. Among the things he ignores are evident signs of the rebellion fomenting in the mind of his son, and it is that oversight, as it happens, which is the precipitating cause of an end to him and his purpose in a burning fiery furnace. Here is one kind of unity the whole rural scene may present to an inhabitant thereof; but not one, of a kind which could unify the many books of the project we consider, for the author sees much more in the district than is embraced by the purposes of a man like Tyler, and, indeed, presents more, in the book which bears that name. The utmost to be got out of any such unity as this, is romance. There is romance of money, as well as romance of love between the sexes. This novel might have been a romance; it is not. The office of a romance is to afford its reader ficticious means for the imaginative magnification of his ego, by identifying himself with the hero or heroine as the case may be. The unity romantic interest affords is not necessarily impaired by mere sensationalism, but it is obliterated in the dignity of high tragedy; the process of it must be pleasing and a happy ending, or one the reader might wish for himself is essential. Mr. Gilbert relies on no such processes; he expressly declares, in the preface of the rural scene already referred to: "....in these books are neither heroes nor heroines, plots nor morals, lessons nor creeds," and adds: "The completed work will contain no more murderers, criminals, suicides, adulterers, prostitutes, perverts, drunkards, artists, mystics, dreamers or saints; and no more striking incidents or mere accidents, than such a district actually affords. It will not depend on high lights, lurid colors, or sensational

acts for what interest it may possess;" which presages a large diversity for unification and certainly bodes an interest higher than mere romance to unify it.

Since the unity presented by the single book in which Tyler is portrayed, is of a higher type than that which the rural scene presents to him; the unity, the whole series of books is designed to present, must, at least, be as high as that of the novel. For no unity can be made subordinate to one of lower type. If a collection of pictures that are acknowledged to be works of art become a unity to any person because he counts upon exhibitting them for gain; they cease to be works of art for him, at least for the time that his mind is engrossed with the purpose of dealing in them. On the other hand, while his mind is filled with their beauty, or with the beauty of any one of them; all purposes of gain are necessarily absent from him. The higher, if it live, always kills the lower or subjugates it. The only possibility by which the thought of gain could co-exist with the beauty of the pictures, would be, that the person was inspired by the desire to share this beauty with other people and thinking of gain only to enable him to do so; because it is only inspiration such as this that makes possible, unity of a kind as high as must be wrought in the observer's mind by the constituent works of art when they do the work of Art in him. To be sure, the unity brought about by the revelation of truth is no lower; but truth revealed is close akin to beauty. For truth of this kind, we must grope with the help of abstraction; for beauty of this kind, we can only lie in wait, to entice it, by such perfections, as we are sometimes able to light upon, and our help comes with placing rigid limitations on the scene we survey or to the matters concerned in it. The division between abstraction in the one, and limitation in the other, is in its effect so hard to define, that if we do not go so far as to identify the two, as in the lines:

"Beauty is truth, truth beauty: that is all ye know on earth, and all ye need to know."

These lines afford perhaps a sufficient excuse for not attempting to discriminate here between beauty and truth of this kind. Rather let us name them together. We can say then: a person may be able to arrange a series of works of fine art, so that they have a unity for him; provided his motive in arranging them is inspired by the spirit of truth and beauty in the meaning of the words as thus used. This, it would seem, is the condition that must be fulfilled, if Mr. Gilbert's project is to succeed. He must have subordinated his endeavors to the dictation of the spirit of truth and beauty before any question can arise of his being able to invoke that spirit in the mind of any reader by the series of books he has in contemplation, taken as a whole.

Granted, it be possible to see the whole rural scene, or indeed any scene embracing the whole lives of many individuals, as one; the gift must be exceedingly rare. Whatever the kind of unity achieved, by whatever means; it implies a commanding view of the experiences of a number of persons, almost superhuman; a marvelous measure of insight and of receptivity is involved. Anyone possessing the gift

could hardly fail to wield immense influence on the actual scene of the district which had become such a unity to him; he might well be its uncrowned king. The few instances in which the faculty for politics has displayed itself with supreme genius may possibly be due to a gift of this character. If Mr. Gilbert possess it, he is fortunate indeed in devoting himself to this project, he pursues one of the least remunerative of the possibilities it opens to him; but that he should be able to pass it on to his readers, and to make them participators in the unity that is his, is almost incredible. The judgments of poltical genius are communicable, but the faculty by which they are reached, and the unity by which they are made possible, cannot, like the mantle of Elijah, be either transmitted or transferred. There is no precedent in literature on which to found the hopes Mr. Gilbert appears to cherish, of being able to make his readers participators in such a vision; always presuming he really has it. The nearest thing is the Rougon Macquart series of Emile Zola. Here, the principal characters are confined to the members of one family; the whole was intended to announce some theory of heredity far from truth or beauty, and if any of the books be deemed a work of fine art, that is not because it forms a part of the series, but in spite of that fact.

Nor are the analogies afforded by precedents furnished by other arts, much more encouraging. The painter of a screen may make a work of art of each panel, and by a *tour de force*, combine them in a single work of art which is the screen as a whole; but a painter who extends his canvas to embrace all he sees is engaged upon panorama, which no one has ever regarded as fine art, in the sense of that which is within the compass of a painter of even small pictures, to aim at.

Accepting that the project is valid, it certainly portends a new departure in literature, though it may prove impracticable and therefore a false departure. The only reason for not absolutely declining to believe in its practicability is that there is no placing any limits to future conquests of the spirit of truth and beauty, or saying what triumphs may attend it in the immediate future. Consider the march of its sovereignty over nature within historic times. There was a time, apparently, when the spirit of truth and beauty revealed itself to man through nature; only by outward aspects of the human form, by single leaves and flowers, or perhaps by the growing plant as a whole. The ancients appear to have gone so far as to have discovered it in simple contiguities; a palm tree and a temple side by side; of revelations on a larger scale there is no sign. There are, indeed, many passages in the classics which mark the pleasing aspects of green fields, fruitful trees, and other indications of plenty; but the pleasantness to which they testify, is, like that presented by a well laid dinner table, or the promise of ready satisfaction to such desires of self-interest as political economists have since expounded; a pleasantness on the same level as that their comedies afford, a pleasantness of which their tragedies were purged by the portrayal of agony and fear.

There is no evidence that Greek or Roman ever saw beauty in natural scenery, of that high kind they could

see in the human form, or in the drama of human actions. Snow-capped hills, rough water, and stormy skies, for them held no beauty of any kind; mountain peaks were things to shudder at; the illimitable ocean filled them only with dismay; living in places, to us, as rich in scenes of natural beauty as any on this earth, they had nothing to say about it; their literature contains no hint such scenes exist. Truly: industrious students have, by hard searching, been able to discover passages which can, by the light of beauty since revealed, be made to bear the interpretation that they who wrote them were not untouched by beauty of this kind; but that signifies nothing. If a race so alive to such beauty in other forms, and so responsive to its appeal; as, for example, the Greeks; had been able to find it, as is vouchsafed to us, on sea, and sky, and land, it is not a few rare passages that would bear witness to the fact. The whole literature of that race would have been as full of testimony; as is our own, from the time of the Lake poets onward.

It was shortly before the opening of the 19th century that the spirit of beauty, with one swift advance, took possession of the mountains and the gale, invaded the uninhabitable places of the earth, and sanctified the desert and the glacier to its use. The progress of its march to sovereignty over nature is the progress of its triumph in the minds of men looking upon nature; until that particular unity which is beauty of the highest kind had entered the mind of someone; it cannot be said to have come into existence. The stages of its advance, as recorded in history, are repeated in the consciousness of each one who grows up to reach the highest enjoyment of natural scenery. At first they are small things that hold him; simple contiguities precede combinations of wider scope. Many a one owes his realization of beauty in a view to the accidental limitation, imposed by some aperture through which he happens first to glimpse it—a window it may be, an archway, or even a field glass, and for a long period his appreciations of beauty in scenery, are confined to particular prospects to be had at particular points of view. That is where the painters are so helpful; they are twice favored, in that they have the vision themselves, and can show it to others. The stage at which a country is beautiful, because in it are to be found many such points of view; comes along before the stage at which a whole country-side is embraced in a unity which is beauty.

It is possible, the spirit of truth and beauty may be about to add another kingdom to her realm. Hitherto she has manifested herself, by the intermediation of letters, in relations and interactions of a limited number of persons only, as presented in a novel or a play; she is, perhaps, about to bring a whole population under her sway in one all-embracing unity that will require many volumes to present. Mr. Gilbert may be one already favored with this vision; possibly one among many that have been so favored; in any case, the only reasonable interpretation that can be placed upon the ac-

count he gives of his project is that he has dedicated his life to the task of making such a vision, a possession to those who read and understand him. Whether this new literary departure will proceed to a great literary arrival, or indeed, to any literary arrival, remains to be seen.

The Faun

To H. L.

By WILLIAM FAULKNER

When laggard March, a faun whose stampings ring
And ripple the leaves with hiding: vain pursuit
Of May's anticipated dryad, mute
And yet unwombed of the moist flanks of spring;

Within the green dilemma of faint leaves
His panting puzzled heart is wrung and blind:
To run the singing corridors of wind,
Out-pace waned moons to May hand shapes and grieves;

Or, leafed close and passionate, to remain
And taste his bitter thumbs 'till May again
Left bare by wild vines' slipping, does incite
To strip the musiced leaves upon her breast
And from a cup unlipped, undreampt, unguessed.
Sip that wine sweet-sunned for Jove's delight.

Epistle To C. S. Concerning Burial In Illinois

By W. L.

Herrin is a long way from here,
and there are piles of unknown dead in Potter's Field;
but there is something about being buried in dark, coal ground
with a June sun roaring and blazing overhead,
and nobody around to say: "Yeah, he was a hard workin'
feller, and sent money home regiler."

There are sixteen of them on Herrin Hill
and I'll bet they were good huskies—
Lithuanians, Swedes, Poles, Czechs....
You've seen them loafing over the rail on an ocean liner—
bulging, hairy arms, and thick faces....

Melt them into Americans in a coal mine....
Eight on, and eight off, and every other Sunday....
Sunday, with stiff clothes,
hanging around the corner, or playing billiards in the pool parlor.
.....20 lira to the dollar, and an Olive Patch near Florence some day....
(olive trees near Florence are silver gray in the sun!).

They don't understand Union language;
But even a Swede can hear a bullet talk....
Round 'em up.... corrall 'em at the edge of town....and give 'em the gat.
The earth in Herrin is ground with coal dust and murky cinders
And a couple of quarts of blood.
Front pages, a grand jury, and sixteen unidentified bodies in the Town Hall.
If no one shows up, bury 'em on Thursday, boys.

A little, stark line winds out of town, and up Herrin Hill, and it's hot as Hell in the sun.
It doesn't take many to bury sixteen—
a few body carriers, a union inspector, a preacher;

And the A. P. Man—
"....were given a simple burial to-day by the
union officials....they committed their
bodies to earth but forgot to give their
souls to God...."
It makes me nervous.... those sixteen wingless souls, floundering
and flopping around, six feet under Hell.

They buried themselves that day:
One cubic inch out of the liver and guts of
128,000,000 folks in the U. S. A., and
987,000,000 in China, Peru, and points east
is buried forever, six feet under the top of Herrin Hill....
Also:
1 patch of gray silver that was an Olive Grove near Florence;
2 fishing smacks off the coast of Naples, heavy with a good catch;
4 small acre farms in Poland.
and a half dozen, or so, new starts in Nebraska, Wyoming, and
California.

I'm going to organize a bugle blowing, prayer meeting for sixteen dead
huskies....
Come on, you bartenders,
lunch roomers,
billiard parlorites,
whores,
etcetera.
Come on, all you casuals who knew them—
We're going to have a brass band prayer meeting,
and let out a prayer that will bust clean through and shiver down in Hell
And stop the worms a minute....
A prayer that will break away from the flat-faced glare of the sun
and reach cool darkness....
And if there is Anyone listening beyond the hills....
and if.... and if.....
(and of all "and ifs" that is the most sullen desperate),
Let Him sprout wings
on dry, meat picked bones
and give them a sail to Heaven.

Sonnet

By COURTLAND DARKE BAKER

They say, that when into great Priam's halls
The greater Menelaus strode, he found
Only a shadow, such as sometimes falls
From stars, wrapped with his loved's body round.
The twice-won bride he bore across the sea
To Sparta was but mist, while Helen slept
In a gold-crimsoned room, on ebony,
Scented with lotos, where the hot Nile crept.

This is a story that is old and garbled:
How Greece is no fit place for love to die—
That passion fades, and beauty soon is marbled.
And knowing this, Helen herself must fly
From Greece to Egypt's dark-stained scarlet clime,
Where love dies sharply in its dreadful prime.

New Orleans

By JAMES FEIBLEMAN

It was a veil went by
  With a moldy savour.
Let no man ever die
  With less than like flavor,
Which can be felt along the day
Filling the Vieux Carré.

I saw tall women most
  But only one would frown.
New Orleans is a woman lost
  With lean head bent down
Hearing through folded hands
The waltz of the dance.

Reviews

"HELIODORA AND OTHER POEMS"

Heliodora and Other Poems, by H. D. Houghton Mifflin, 1924.

TO those who are troubled by the prolixity and the flabby rhythms of most of the verse being done these days, H. D.'s poems are a never-failing solace. Of few poets living can one feel so certain that their product is good. Such steady performance directed by so fine a critical sense is not to be found among H. D.'s contemporaries. "Heliodora and Other Poems" is all that was expected and more. It contains some of the finest work of this generation. H. D. is a master craftsman in diction and a splendid craftsman in rhythm. Her conceptions are beautiful and the images used in the rendering are all that could be desired. The merit of her work is so generally recognized, however, that it is quite needless to waste time in emphasizing it. The space is better used in quoting. Here are, first, a few extracts, and then three poems from this delightful collection:

I thought to hear him speak
the girl might rise
and make the garden silver,
as the white moon breaks,
"Nossis," he cried, "a flame."

. . . . . .

He said, "the rain loving,"
I said, "the narcissus, drunk,
drunk with the rain."

I said, "surprise the muses,
take them by surpise;
it is late,
rather it is dawn-rise,
those ladies sleep, the nine,
our own king's mistresses."

"I will bring you the lily that laughs
I will twine
with soft narcissus, the myrtle,
sweet crocus, white violet,
the purple hyacinth, and last,
the rose, loved-of-love,
that these may drip on your hair
the less soft flowers,
may mingle sweet with the sweet
of Heliodora's locks,
myrrh-curled.

And to-day white violets
shine beside white lilies
adrift on the mountain side;
to-day the narcissus opens
that loves the rain."

. . . . . .

Let her who walks in Paphos
take the glass,
let Paphos take the mirror
and the work of frosted fruit,
gold apples set
with silver apple-leaf,
white leaf of silver
wrought with vein of gilt.

OREAD

Whirl up, sea—
whirl your pointed pines,
splash your great pines
on our rocks,
hurl your green over us,
cover us with your pools of fir.

HELEN

All Greece hates
the still eyes in the white face,
the lustre as of olives
where she stands,
and the white hands.

All Greece reviles
the wan face when she smiles,
hating it deeper still
when it grows wan and white,
remembering past enchantments
and past ills.

Greece sees unmoved,
God's daughter, born of love,
the beauty of cool feet
and slenderest knees,
could love indeed the maid,
only if she were laid,
white ash amid funereal cypresses.

HOLY SATYR

Most Holy Satyr,
like a goat,
with horns and hooves
to match thy coat
of russet brown,
I make leaf-circlets
and a crown of honey-flowers
for thy throat;
where the amber petals
drip to ivory,
I cut and slip
each stiffened petal
in the rift
of carven petal;
honey horn
has wed the bright
virgin petal of the white
flower cluster; lip to lip
let them whisper,
let them lilt, quivering.

Most Holy Satyr,
like a goat,
hear this our song,
accept our leaves,
love-offering,
return our hymn,
like echo fling
a sweet song,
answering note for note.

The very fine "Centaur Song" in "Heliodora" appeared originally in The Double Dealer as did "At Eleusis."

JOHN MCCLURE.

THE MASTERS OF MODERN ART

The Masters of Modern Art, by Walter Pach. B. W. Huebsch, Inc., 1924.

FOR the purposes of Mr. Pach's book, the French Revolution and the World War mark the opening and close of the "modern period". The great painters and sculptors of this period are the masters of modern art, modern art being simply "the ensemble of the painting and sculpture of the period (whose expression through architecture and the applied arts is of relatively slight importance)". Thus defined, modern art is nineteenth century art; or more strictly nineteenth century painting and sculpture: a definition to which I have no objection.

The first thing to observe of modern art, as Mr. Pach observes, is that it is "if not exclusively French, at least an art having Paris as its hearth and focus". This is in accord with the facts. "The great men outside of France at the beginning of the modern period, Goya, Blake, Constable and Turner, all formed their art in the eighteenth century, which is to say, in the preceding epoch". And "when, in the time under consideration, we reach foreigners of the first rank, like Jongkind, van Gogh and Picasso, we find them coming to France and carrying on the work of the French school." According to Elie Faure, surely one of the greatest critics of art (perhaps the greatest), the period under consideration is the great period of French art; and, as I remember him, one of the great periods of art. One has only to mention names, such names as Ingres, Bayre, Corot, Delacroix, Daumier, Courbet, Manet, Degas, Renoir, Cezanne, Seurat, Matisse, Derain, Picasso.

The second thing to observe, of modern art, as Mr. Pach observes, is its ecclecticism. "From the beginning of the period, when Ingres went to Italy and discovered the primitives, when a little later—Delacroix went to Morocco and discovered the Orient, we see the tendency of the modern world to extend its horizon and set its art upon a wider

base than that upon which the perfect but narrow art of the eighteenth century had rested. Greek art was studied anew and from such examples (the Elgin and the Aeginetan marbles, for instance) as had not been known since before the Christian era. Then came an interest in Egyptian and Assyrian art, which like the Gothic and, in the second half of the nineteenth century, the art of the Far East, came to be looked on as supremely significant and not as curiosities outside the great tradition. In the last decades we have gone even further afield. Gauguin brough us an influence from the art of the South Sea peoples, and the later men have extended their investigation to the principles of Byzantine, Hindu, Negro and Mexican art."

The third thing to observe of modern art is that it is in the great tradition. As Mr. Pach observes: "Today we see that nothing so much resembles a fine ancient work as a fine modern one, however different in outer aspect; and that no work is farther from the classic than that which copies merely its externals." Or as Elie Faure says: "Tout art est classique, et de chez lui, et de partout, a condition qu'il soit vivant."

The first chapter of Mr. Pach's book is a survey of the general characteristics of the art of the "modern period". In the succeeding chapters—"From the Revolution to Renoir, "The Poles of the Modern Movement", "After Impressionism", "Cubism", and "To-day"—he traces the line of descent, the line of ascent, from David, "the incarnation in art of the French Revolution", to the masters of to-day.

"We are still living in a time when there are masters," concludes Mr. Pach. "One feels it again on returning to one of those creations of new and impeccable form which Duchamp has given us. One feels it before the late pictures of Matisse, no less creative, for all the subtlety with which he now transmutes the appearances of the world of the eyes."

"Thus the work of the artists goes on 'according to the days, according to the season,' as Redon says. 'Nothing comes from nothing,' another of his sayings ran: each painting or sculpture is both effect and cause. We divide off a certain period and call it modern so that we may, for the moment, study it for itself; but these men whom we have been observing can not really be detached from the past, and they—with it—have in their hands the making of the future."

As summary, I quote from the wrapper of Mr. Pach's book what Elie Faure says of its contents: "I know nothing more luminous, nothing simpler and stronger, in the critical literature of our time. . . . It shows how, in the minds of the artists, the spiritual plane has progressively replaced the plane of nature."

LOUIS GILMORE.

THOREAU THROUGH FRENCH EYES

Henry Thoreau, Sauvage, by Leon Bazalgette. F. Rieder et Cie, Paris, 8fr. 75.

THE word "sauvage" in this title need not frighten anyone. M. Bazalgette does not present the solitary dweller on the shores of Walden pond to his French readers as a "savage". There is no exact English equivalent for the French "sauvage"; but "the un-

tamed" comes understandably close to it.

An even more penetratingly descriptive term applied elsewhere by M. Bazalgette to Thoreau is contained in the sentence, *"Henry nourrit une âme de réfractaire."* A "refractaire" Thoreau certainly was; from his clear-eyed youth when he wrote: "The order of things should be reversed; the seventh day should be man's work day, when he earns his bread in the sweat of his brow, and the six others his Sunday, consecrated to that which he loves..", up to his last feeble days when to the aunt who asked if he had made his peace with God, he replied: "I have never quarreled with Him."

His refractoriness was one of the sources of Thoreau's greatness; in his time, when the people of the young American republic were so swayed by the gain-making ideals of typical petite bourgeoisie, someone was needed who could adequately rebuke those who sold doves in the temple; but it was also one of the sources of his most pronounced weakness. Gently but firmly does M. Bazalgette take Thoreau to task for his inability to control his bruskness towards his fellow man, for his lack of spontaniety in friendship, for his failure to respond to proffered affection.

"Ce que cachait un sauvage sous le masque d'une retenue féroce, á qui l'eut-il confie? Les arbres n'entendaient pas..."

M. Bazalgette understands how poignantly Thoreau suffered from this failing, but he declines to sympathize with him. "Serait-ce votre faute à vous qui accusez les autres?"

However, M. Bazalgette makes it clear that in going to his cabin in the Concord woods Thoreau went not as an anchorite. "Henry did not break with the world. He simply held it for a moment, at a distance, to make room for a work of creation."

M. Bazalgette's study of Thoreau contains many noteworthy things, not the least of which is the French biographer's ability graphically to reproduce the New England scene and atmosphere, with its natural beauties and human bleakness. If one did not know otherwise, one might well surmise that the author had personally visited the settings which he describes, and that he was familiar with the contradictory soil out of which grew the scrub oak of Thoreau.

M. Bazalette's method is the simple one of first discovering the essential Thoreau attitude and then of recording the external events of Thoreau's life as they struck upon Thoreau's consciousness and forced their way into his inner life. At one time the biographer is Thoreau himself; at another he is the companion who, without losing his admiration for the resolution with which Thoreau lived his own kind of life, does not hesitate to remonstrate with the lonely man who sometimes mistook theory for ultimate truth.

The book twice rises to an eloquent climax, once in the chapter on the trial, condemnation, and execution of John Brown, and the other in the meeting of Thoreau and Whitman. Both chapters are charged with a restraint which does not hide deep feeling.

Thoreau's visit to Whitman in the latter's Brooklyn home enables the author to introduce several telling contrasts: the Long Islander florescent,

simple and out-giving; the Concorder silent, sinewy and tightly-contained within himself. Since there is no record of the actual conversation, M. Bazalgette relates it as it might have been, through the clever and novel device of an antiphony made up of parallel observations taken from either man's written work. This is a device altogether new to modern biography, and no French writer is better equipped to use it in this particular case than M. Bazalgette, who has previously published a translation of Thoreau's essays under the title of "Desobéir" and a work on Whitman entitled "le Poeme-Evangile de Walt Whitman."

American readers will be able to appreciate M. Bazalgette's achievement as regards Thoreau by reading Van Wyck Brooks' translation recently issued under the title of "Thoreau: Bachelor of Nature."

PHILLIPS RUSSELL.

AN ANTIDOTE FOR THE NORDIC COMPLEX

(Races, Nations and Classes, by Herbert Adolphus Miller. J. B. Lippincott Company, Philadelphia)

WHEN the generation which fought the great war went to high school it learned that the nineteenth century was an era of progress such as the world never saw before, and that it had presented humanity with many inestimable boons, one of which was something called the Rise of Nationalism. Peoples such as the Germans and Italians, who for centuries had spent most of their political energy in hating other Germans and Italians now tore down the boundaries between their various petty states and were able to collect all the previous small hatreds into a really imposing Hate, the Germans building up a particularly fine malignancy which they applied to the world in general.

Similar enough to Nationalism is Racialism, a new species of which is becoming a cult in the United States, thanks to certain popular writers on anthropology and the Saturday Evening Post. Our land has always had race problems enough, goodness knows, but the conflict between the Nordics (who are often Mediterraneans) and the Alpines and Mediterraneans (who are often Nordics, or else Alpines when they are labeled Mediterraneans and vice versa) has some merit of novelty, anyhow.

Professor Miller, unlike such Cassandras as Lathrop Stoddard, believes that the civilized world could continue civilized even if the White race should cease to control four-fifths of the Earth and even if the so-called Nordics should cease to dominate the rest of the Whites. One of his best chapters is entitled "The Myth of Superiority." Someone should hasten to that doleful prophet, Upton Sinclair, with the glad tidings that a college professor has had the courage to say that "hundred per cent. patriotism and confidence in Nordic superiority are the two most dangerous ideas in the world today because they lead in exactly the opposite direction from that which civilization must take if it is to survive.

"Both these ideas may be described as defense complexes which have sprung into focus with the first uneasy feeling that the old assumptions are no longer valid."

Races held to be inferior are becoming more conscious of themselves. "Whenever a newspaper in India prints in large type the account of every lynching that occurs in the United States it gives a stronger basis for antagonism towards white civilization, and also makes a bond between the Brown and Black races which takes the place of the old isolation."

Professor Miller's book is the sanest I ever read on Nationality, Class and Race. But it will not be widely read, for the reason that it is sane, and I doubt if it will be widely used as a college text, for the same reason. It would not be surprising to see it the object of attack by some of the pompous imbeciles whose intention it is to make Americans the most chauvinistic patriots in the world. Imagine what the Hearst newspapers or the National Security League (not to insult the Hearst newspapers by this grouping) could make out of the following:

"Patriotism is artificial, not inherent."

"But whatever the nature and object of patriotism, it is always being artificially stimulated. An individual is not born into any group except the immediately personal ones to which he will adhere patriotically without artificial stimulation. The technique for this stimulation has become highly specialized.

"Appeals to hate, fear, glory, and honor are always used along with the magnification of the history and heroes of the country. Leadership is in the hands of the intellectuals because of their knowledge, or supposed knowledge, of history. It is no exaggeration to say that patriotism is always aroused by means more or less immoral. The greatest perversion is the teaching of history from the national point of view. Children are nurtured on history out of focus. Egotism in individuals is considered a vice, but in nations it is praised as a virtue. The resultant self-complacency is both tragic and absurd. We admit that in war time propaganda for patriotism transgresses truth in its appeal to hate and vainglory, but it differs only in degree from that of peace time."

"When I am in a foreign land I always thrill at the sight of the American flag, for America means something real to me, yet not all of reality." "Reality demands that we begin to advocate 10 to 25 per cent. patriotism." I hardly expect "Races, Nations and Classes" to be adopted as a text book by the Rotary Clubs this year.

Mankind's triple stratification into race, nation and class was never more sharply defined than today, despite the fact that every race is a mongrel and that chattel slavery and the sovereign's arbitrary power of life and death no longer exist. Aside from those few who would like to minimize all three struggles the most intelligent participants in the triple conflict concentrate their attention on the class conflict which is surely the most logical, becoming self-conscious capitalists or socialists. The mass of the people think first in terms of nationality, and save in regions like our own South or South Africa or Poland where palpably distinct

people live in he same area, few bother themselves about race, in the proper sense of the word. The antagonism between France and Germany is purely a matter of nationality, not of race. Whatever other troubles are in store for this twentieth century of our Lord we hardly need fear a general warfare between the Nordics and Mediterraneans.

Hill Theme

By CRANE THORP

They say, these sailors who smile at me mockingly, slurring the mountains with a flick of a tarred rope and insolence of a sea-chanty, "You have come to us of the sea, from the hills?"

(How could they know that in my heart I cry "Hill! Hill!" tasting in my mouth the white dust of the trails and the honey of its water?)

Listen, you salors and sea-women, contemptuous of this land which you know nothing of:

I have come down from the hills as a painter steps back from his picture, to appraise and re-value it, finding it inevitably good

(When God wishes to judge truly this masterpiece, he must come down to the sea; it may even be that he ascends to the mountains to find the loveliness which you know in your shore lands)

I have come down from the hills to the sea only that I may tell the beauty of them to the world without being choked and made dumb by their wonder

You with your eyes on your feet! Do you think I have chosen the sea?

Listen again, perverts who exult in this wool air and the blade-winds from the ocean:

I will go back from the sea with a scorn for its fickle inconstancies and cheap lure of change, which it uses as light women their tawdry laces

Oh, standing here with my feet wet by a petulant spray, I look back to the Cumberlands, and I see that the picture is good, that the colors I have come so far to observe are true, that the work is the work of a master

I have finished my task. I will go now and dry these wet feet on the long staunch hill grasses

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